

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

*Fourth Series*

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 951.—VOL. XIX.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 1882.

PRICE 1½d.

## ON THE PLANK.

In taking up a newspaper, for city or country town, there is one species of paragraph frequent in its occurrence, to this effect, that certain individuals were brought before magistrates for thefts, burglaries, assaults, or some other delinquency, for the second, third, or fourth time; and the charge being undeniable, they were forthwith sent to prison for an assigned period. We learn by these facts that there is a portion of the general population who are off and on criminals, and whose names and characters are inscribed on the books of the police. In reality, we live in the midst of two kinds of population. One of them consists of persons who quietly pursue courses of honest industry, and are never heard of by the police at all. The other are the wild and predatory classes, who from youth to age live for the most part by some kind of mischief or pilfering. They may do a little honest work at a time, when it agreeably comes in the way; but destitute of foresight or any upright principle, they lapse into crime on the slightest temptation.

These plain truths have never been thoroughly realised. Philosophers go on theorising, to the effect, that all human beings are very much alike as regards intellect and emotions; whereas it is clear that a considerable number of people within the bounds of so-called civilisation, and of improving influences, are a kind of half savages, disposed, like monkeys in a menagerie, to steal from the cages of each other. Education is supposed to be the panacea for curing this unfortunate state of things. In time, when education, now happily set on foot on a comprehensive scale, has thoroughly permeated the community, we may expect that the criminal classes will be materially lessened in number, and that the more gross order of crimes will be of rare occurrence. As matters now stand, according to a late Report of the Directors of Convict Prisons, 'it must be considered as established that education does not furnish such a specific preventive of criminal

tendencies as it was once supposed it would. It may, however, be admitted that it has had some effect, and that it may probably have much altered the character of the crimes which come under the correction of the law, and of the immoralities which do not.'

When transportation was given up, imprisonments for long or short periods were substituted, as a cure for crime. After the experience of a number of years, it has to be acknowledged, with a degree of regret, that the number of criminals remains much as it was before. In the midst of the general perplexity on the subject, one thing occurs to us. It is the strange fancy of endeavouring to effect a cure by repeated imprisonments, which, taken singly or in accumulation, are little better than a mere off-put of time and wastefulness of expenditure. It does not seem to be properly recognised, that the modern prison, established under the sanction of learned and philanthropic sanitarians, is, physically speaking, a very comfortable place, where bed, board, washing, and medical attendance are to be had for nothing; and which, in comparison with the ordinary habitations of those who require to be so treated, is by no means an unpleasant resort. To be sure, there is a certain social degradation in being sent to prison, but that is only where there is a sense of being degraded. The class of persons we speak of have no more a notion of degradation by being immured within the walls of a prison, than sheep have in being driven into a penfold. It is all a matter of course, and probably comes quite handy, as a change of scene, diet, and occupation.

On lately talking to a gentleman who is medical superintendent of a criminal prison in which there is generally from six hundred to seven hundred inmates of the two sexes, he tells us that there is no condition of society within his knowledge where there is such excellent health as in the cells of which he has the supervision. The prisoners come in dirty, miserable, ragged, half-hungered, and in a condition altogether pitiable. In a little time, by means of regular

diet and work, and regular rest at night, along with a certain amount of open-air exercise within the yards appointed for this recreation, they pick up in a wonderful manner. Within three months, they are different creatures. Unfortunately, when the period of their imprisonment expires, they are turned out into the broad world; and ten to one but they relapse into their previously horrible state of wretchedness. And again, after a short time, they come back under a fresh sentence for a new delinquency. We ask, if this system of repeated short imprisonments is consistent with common-sense?

We have only to walk along the thronged and older part of some cities, to note the wretched condition of the class of persons, men and women, who from time to time are kept at the public cost in the prisons. There they are, lounging, dirty, ragged, and hopeless. Men standing in groups, with clay pipes in their mouths, with their hands in their pockets, staring about in the stupor of idleness. Some of them, perhaps, have a battered eye, covered with a patch of some sort, or they exhibit some other infirmity. As for the women, they are generally poor-looking creatures, who cannot be seen without pity.

Is there, then, no remedy? In the present tentative condition of affairs, we can only offer a few hints. In the first place, the town-resorts of the habitually criminal classes should be eradicated; but that never can be, while narrow lanes and courts, scarcely pervious to the light of day, are suffered to exist. We would lay it down as a primary principle in social organisation, that no means should be afforded for huddling into dingy resorts, like rats and wild beasts. The safety of society requires that all human dwellings should have such a frontage as will bring the inhabitants in a reasonable degree within reach of the public eye. Show us a town or city abounding in structural obscurities, deficient in air and sunlight, and there we will show you hordes of the demoralised and dangerous classes, to say nothing of groups of unhappy beings laid down with typhoid and other deadly diseases. Municipal authorities are slow in recognising the truth of these remarks. The world at large does not give itself the trouble to think upon the subject.

The thorough eradication of these loathsome resorts—the slums of popular slang—would, we think, go far towards a wholesome preventive alike of crime and disease; and we have evidences that such would be the case, from the attempts that have been made in this direction under legislative authority. We are not so sanguine as to expect that while the human heart remains as it is, crime will be got rid of altogether; but we aver that it would be possible to effect very material ameliorations. By letting things take their course, crime is to a certain

extent cultivated or played with. The resorts we speak of are the nests where it is fostered and brought to maturity; and all such nests, as a matter of police, should be extirpated, perhaps not abruptly, but at least within a reasonable length of time.

Next, as regards punishment. The method of awarding repeated imprisonments has evidently proved a failure. The petty offender seems first to get a week, next two weeks, then a month, then two months, then three months, and so on he works his way to eighteen months; beyond that he passes under a higher jurisdiction into penal servitude, first for five years, and afterwards for longer periods—in many instances, incorrigible to the last. That appears to be the routine. As this process of dealing with criminals has not answered, let us try something else. Possibly, it would be advantageous in many cases to return to schemes of flagellation. Whipping, we understand, has proved so effectual a deterrent, as to have put a stop entirely to the crime of garroting. Why not extend its application, particularly as regards youthful male offenders? It is a punishment especially adapted to all crimes that are mean and despicable in their nature, such as assaults on women and wife-beating. For offences of this description, a certain number of lashes on the bare back should be added to the ordinary penalties.

Other forms of personal discomfort without endangering health might likewise be found to be so awkwardly disagreeable, as to terrify habitual depredators, and to force them into the salutary belief, that after all it is better to be honest and trust to regular work, than to continue a course of thieving. The tread-mill is one species of discomfort that has had its day in deterring criminals. The latest discomfort that we have heard of is ordinarily known as being put 'on the plank.' With a considerable degree of satisfaction, we learn, that if properly and persistently administered, it is likely to do the business. It is neither more nor less than causing prisoners to make their bed of a hard deal board, or guard-bed, as it is technically called, from its resemblance to the bed used in guard-houses. When on the plank, prisoners are not altogether unprovided with means for keeping themselves warm at night. They are supplied with two single blankets in summer, and three in winter, a bed-rug, and two sheets. Why the luxury of sheets should be awarded, is beyond our comprehension. But let that pass. The pillow is of wood. This, as far as we can discover from 'Instructions from the Prison Commissioners,' is the destiny of all convicted male prisoners between thirteen and sixty years of age, unless excused by the surgeon, and continues to be so until 'they have earned two hundred and forty marks; after which they shall be allowed a mattress for five nights in each week till they have earned four hundred and eighty marks; when they shall be allowed a

mattress for six nights in each week till they have earned seven hundred and twenty marks; after which they shall be allowed a mattress every night. But they are liable at any time to be deprived of the mattress for idleness or misconduct, till they have earned such a number of marks as the Governor may deem advisable, in addition to any other punishment he may award.'

From this statement, it would appear that all convicted male prisoners begin with a plank-bed, and that a modification only takes place by a certain course of good behaviour; and it is likely enough that the suffering experienced induces the prisoner so to conduct himself as to secure a mattress and soft pillow at the earliest opportunity. It would be interesting to know, however, how far the deterrent so modified has a permanent effect. From their repeated imprisonments, after short intervals, the modification of the plank seems to lead to no effectual eradication of crime. It may produce decent behaviour while in prison; but in the long-run, that is of minor importance. We should like to see the plank administered with such persistency as to greatly lessen the number of offenders. We feel confident that, properly applied, the plank is the best thing yet thought of to diminish criminal practices.

We are not unprepared for hearing that any proposal to introduce a more frequent application of the whip, as also an unmitigated use of the plank-bed, should be stigmatised as cruel, barbarous, and so forth. A plain answer to objections of this kind is, that misdemeanants have a free choice. If they prefer all the usual comforts of civilised life, liberty, and a good bed included, let them remain honest and peaceable subjects. If they prefer the reverse, let them take the consequence. Nobody counsels severity as a matter of taste, but as a sad necessity, and with a hope that by such means a distinct impression will by-and-by be made in lessening the number of habitual delinquents. But the severities spoken of would render the majority of prisoners intractable! So will say all who wish the present state of affairs to continue. It is plausible bugbears like this that keep the world from advancing.

Were it generally known that being committed to prison is equivalent to lying on a hard board during the whole period of incarceration, magistrates, we anticipate, would soon find their occupation pretty nearly gone. There might be little diminution in the number of first offences; but second, third, and fourth offences would have a fair chance of being extinguished, or reduced to a minimum. At all events, a reform in this direction is greatly needed. The present system of repeated imprisonments for short periods is a grievous scandal, which cannot be too soon removed. Others may have some schemes for reforming the abuse, worth listening to; our

proposal is simple, and likely to be efficacious. It is, longer imprisonments after the first, and throughout, a stern administration of the Plank.

W. C.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER IX.—SHE ANSWERED 'YES.'

'HILLO! hillo!' cried Lumby senior, going lamely across the hall. 'What's the matter, Gerard?'

'I'm in a bit of a hurry,' said Gerard, cooling down a little. 'I want to speak to you, that's all.'

'It's worth no man's while to risk his neck to hear *me* talk,' said Lumby senior, with a chuckle.—'Come in, my lad. What is it?' He sat in a big library chair; and Gerard having closed the door, walked up and down for a minute or two, and then planting himself before his sire, he spoke.

'Father, I'm thinking about getting married.'

'Ah!' said Lumby senior, with his features a little twisted by a sudden twinge of gout. 'Is that a general or a particular statement? Is it an abstract sentiment, or is there a lady in the case already?'

'There is a lady in the case already.'

'Who is it?'

'Miss Jolly,' responded the lover, looking and feeling like a defiant criminal.

'Very good taste, my lad,' said the elder man—'very good taste indeed. Don't tell your mother I said so; but if I were younger—A—ah! That isn't conscience, but the gout. Well?'

'I have spoken to her father this morning.'

'The dickens you have!' said Mr Lumby, with another facial distortion.

'He demands,' pursued Gerard, 'that your explicit consent shall be given before he can entertain my proposal.'

'He demands that my explicit consent shall be given before he can entertain your proposal, does he? Gerard, your language is worthy of your university. An Oxford training has not been wasted on you. What do you want to get married for? Why, only the other day you were a legal infant. Gerard, my lad, keep clear of my plaguy foot, and come here and shake hands. You had only to choose a lady to be sure of my consent. And I know she's pretty, and I know she's clever, and I think she's good. Go and win her, my lad, and wear her worthily, and let your old dad nurse his grandchildren before he dies.'

The old man was riper and mellow than the young one. As they shook hands, Gerard's look was a trifle sulky. He could not show emotion gracefully, and he was deeply moved. But the grip of the young giant's fingers made his father's hand ache for five minutes afterwards, and a good deal more love went into that hand-shaking, from both sides, than some very fluent people ever know in all their lives. So, bearing the paternal as well as the maternal blessing, the wooer rode once more away. He went gallantly this time, riding like a lover. Could he fail to win with such good auguries behind him?

'My dear Constance,' said Mr Jolly, entering the room in which his daughter sat, 'Mr Lumby has honoured me by a formal proposal for your hand.'

'And you,' said Constance, who had watched the interview from her window, 'have sent him about his business?'

'Yes,' said her father, with his wrinkled smile. 'His business is to obtain his father's consent. I have no doubt of his attachment to you; that has been evident from the first; but as I told him, in a matter of this kind everything must be above-board, and I could not dream of allowing my consent or yours to be extorted, until all things were made clear on his side.'

'And when he comes back, I am to say "Yes," papa?' asked Constance.

'My dear,' said Mr Jolly, shrugging his shoulders ever so little, 'I am not an ogre, or a wicked father in a novel in the *Young Ladies' Tea-table Gazette*. You will exercise your judgment. Mr Lumby, armed with his father's consent, will seem to me a most desirable and eligible husband.' He spoke of Gerard as an auctioneer speaks of a family mansion.

Constance sighed faintly. 'I think he is a good man, papa,' she said; 'and I know he is very much attached to me. But' (Mr Jolly shrugged his shoulders again, a little more pronouncedly)—'I like him too,' she said—'but'—

'Once more, my dear,' said Mr Jolly, 'I am not the wicked father of a cheap romance; but if you throw away such a chance as this, I shall think that you deserve never to have another.'

'Very well, papa,' said Constance; 'I will do as you wish.'—He kissed her with unusual warmth and kindness.—'And now,' she said, 'let us say no more about it till the knight-errant comes.'

The knight-errant was not long in coming. Soberly enough he came in sight; but there were evidences on gallant Rupert's sides which told of haste, and Gerard's absence had been marvellously brief.

'I have seen my father,' he said to Mr Jolly, 'and I carry with me not merely his approval, but his warmest wishes.'

'That smooths my way completely,' said Mr Jolly. 'There remain only my daughter's wishes to consult. And there, Mr Lumby—let me be candid with you—I can exercise no influence, no control. You have my cordial good wishes. I can offer you nothing more.' Again the Arcadian rather overdid it.

'Mr Jolly,' said Gerard, somewhat stiffly, 'do me the justice to believe that I would not win by coercion, even if I could.'

'I can't have a row with the fellow now,' said the guileless shepherd inly. 'But when they're married, I shan't see much of them. I can go back to the Albany. It's the only decent place to live in.' He added aloud: 'Our sentiments are happily at one upon that matter.—And now, Mr Lumby, what is the next step? Shall I smooth your way at all by preparing my daughter to receive your proposal, and by telling her that you make it with my sanction? Or would you prefer to wait?'

'I don't think,' said Gerard, 'that there can be any advantage in delay.'

'No?' asked Mr Jolly, smilingly. 'Well, perhaps not—perhaps not.' Within himself, he exulted. Constance had been a great anxiety to him. It was a big thing to book a young man with half a million in perspective—not quite the biggest thing the daughter of such a man as Mr Jolly might have done, he thought, but eminently satisfactory. 'Will you excuse me, then?' Gerard, too much agitated for speech, inclined his head in answer; and Mr Jolly left the room. 'Constance,' he said, himself a little shaken, 'you have quite made up your mind?'—She nodded with a faint smile. She had had no dream of love, but always until now there had been a hope that the dream might come and fulfil itself. And now? Well, Gerard was very nice and manly—she had little fault to find with him; but she did not love him. She would have liked to have loved her husband a little. As her father had said only the day before, Nature returns, even when expelled with a pitchfork. All her training had gone against marrying for love, and she had heard it condemned as silly, and even as sometimes wicked. She sighed a little, smiled a little at the sigh, and so surrendered. She arose, and surveyed her own regal and tender beauty in the mirror, regarding herself critically. Her bosom heaved with a passing sense of triumph, and as she turned, Gerard entered. She surveyed him demurely. A man at least, every inch of him. Not a mere creature of the ballroom and the Park. Now that she looked at him with this new interest, that he was to be her husband, she saw much to admire in him. She waved him to a seat; but he stood before her and pleaded his cause.

'Miss Jolly; your father has already prepared you for my visit?'—Her bowed head bent a little lower in affirmation.—'I am glad of that, for I should not have liked to startle you by my abruptness.'—A little smile flickered across the hidden features at this statement. Poor Gerard thought that this virgin fortress was here for the first time assailed. Constance remembered a score of such scenes, and almost the only difference between them and this was that she had always said 'No,' and was now to say 'Yes.' There was the least possible quiver of earnestness in his voice. 'I suppose,' he said, with unintentional quaintness, 'to tell anybody straight out, "I love you," would be a little hard; and I think the truer it is, the harder it is.'—Constance, who was perfectly self-possessed, smiled again at this. The simplicity was manly: it even touched her a little.—'If I speak clumsily, I will ask you to excuse me. I have only known you for three months, and that is but a little time. I should have laughed three months ago to think that such a love—the world cost him a great and evident effort, and it was plain that it was sacred to him; the listener knew it—'could have grown in a man's heart in such a time. But it has grown there, and my life is in your hands. I ask a great thing—I ask a thing of which I know I am unworthy—I ask you to share my life with me. It shall be my continual study to make you happy.' There his very earnestness broke him down.

'Mr Lumby,' said Constance—she could say nothing ungracefully, and though she was as



cool as a cucumber, he thought she looked and spoke like a pitying angel—'you ask a great thing—a great thing on both sides. Let me ask a little one. Give me a day to think of your offer.'

'Give me an answer now!' he pleaded. She was sitting before him looking upwards, and for the first time in this interview he saw her eyes and looked into them. There is no exaggerating the matter—he was head over ears in love—and love, even in a man who means to be self-possessed, will have its way. The glance of the wonderful violet eyes brought him down upon one knee before her. One white hand was stretched a little towards him. He took it in both his. 'Give me an answer now!' he murmured, with pleading eyes fastened on her face—'give me an answer now!' This was a phase of love-making on which Constance had not counted, and it was new to her. The man was kissing one hand, and had possessed himself of the other—a prodigious and unheard-of situation. It was not unpleasant, though at first a little alarming. 'Say Yes,' said this audacious Gerard, murmuring with his breath upon her cheek, and both her hands in his. And it was wonderful and strange—if Nature were ever wonderful and strange—to see how the stronger male nature triumphed; for caught in this unexpected snare, wooed for once like a woman, by a man who loved her, in place of being talked to by an automaton as though she were an elegant waxwork, she answered 'Yes;' and for one bewildered minute her head lay on Gerard's shoulder, and the first kiss that ever love had planted there was warm upon her lips. Then, fairly frightened at his impetuosity, she sprang to her feet, and escaped to think and wonder. And when she saw herself in the glass, she saw a more lovely creature reflected there than ever her mirror had shown her until now; for her eyes were all agleam, and her face was rosy, and there was a marvellous new look, she had never seen before. And as she stood there, she made one utterly feminine remark aloud—a remark so womanly, that it startled her to know that it could have crossed her as a thought: 'I ought to be a happy woman to be loved so much.'

Was the dream to come after all? Was she too, like the spurious heroines of romance, to have a husband whom she could love, and not merely tolerate?

The poor Gerard went home feeling criminal, and yet conscious of a certain sense of satisfaction. And after all, if a woman does not want to be kissed, what right has she to be downright bewitching? An unanswerable query.

#### BOLOGNA.

'GENOVA *la superba*,' say the Italians when characterising their cities; but 'Bologna *la Grassa*;' for it is no less true that if Genoa be proud, and justly so, of her vast and stately palaces, so Bologna reposes lazily upon her laurels, with the comfortable certainty that she is the best fed and the fattest of all her compeers in the bright Italian land. She draws her nourishment and sustenance from the rich Emilian plain;

so fertile that the vine festoons between the mulberry trees droop to the very ground with the luscious clusters of purple grapes—unable to support, even with the friendly aid of assistant trees, the weight of the heavy bunches. The golden heads of the Indian corn, with its tall stature and its waving leaves, are half hidden in the abundant and ever-springing verdure of the level plain, with its frequent ducts of water, carefully planned irrigation, and the garden-like cultivation which meets the eye mile after mile. In this fertile plain, girt within her circling walls, does indolent Bologna repose, with the careless content of the blameless Ethiop of old, scarcely raising her eyes to the far-off guardianship of the misty Alps, and the nearer boundary of the faintly blue Euganean Hills, and the distant glitter on the horizon of the Adriatic Sea.

Entering the portals of her lofty walls, the traveller is struck by the somewhat heavy-headed look of the colonnaded town, supported arch after arch on massive piers, which lend a rather gloomy appearance to the streets. The tall and frowning palaces are decked with sculptured marble heads, and have the look, rare in Italy, of being both well kept and lived in. The churches own mostly unfinished façades, which Bologna will doubtless some time, when she awakes, bestir herself to complete. The Seven Churches of St Stephen—one of them an ancient basilica of the early church—contain two richly carved antique sarcophagi, used as the altars of the saints Vitalis and Agricola. One was enriched with peacocks, wondrously sculptured, and the other with lions and a stag. The church is also adorned with costly columns of marble, once forming part of the temple of Isis on this very spot, now hallowed by the bones contained in the lovely pillared shrine of St Petronius. Behind it is an *ambo*, perhaps of the ninth century, beset with beautiful reliefs of the four evangelists. Nor can that ruined cloister of the Celestins ever be forgotten, with its double arcade of lightly springing arches; reminding one in some dim way of the Ducal Palace at Venice, and all inlaid with marble mosaic between the arches, in various hue of peacock wings—purple and red and green and golden and blue: a harmony of suggested colour, which, even to recall, gives inexpressible delight.

A vast and ancient font of long-past Lombard kings stands in the *atrium*; while in the cloister, the curious and picturesque monkish well must not be passed over unnoticed; nor yet the tomb of St Petronius, built, it is said, upon the model of the Holy Sepulchre. This inclosure of the Seven Churches, with its singular assemblage of associations, heathen, Christian, sacred, and profane, is a veritable chapter of history written upon stone, which would well repay many an hour of curious and minute attention: for echoes of old Egypt make themselves heard in this pillared silence, and voices of Rome, whose wealth transported all this marble from Africa's burning plain; the blood of Christian martyrs cries from their tombs, and ruder notes arise of barbaric conquest by Lombard invaders, when Rome itself, like Babylon, had fallen. The careless modern spirit succeeds to this heritage of the ages; and it is chiefly as an object of curiosity and interest to travellers that these half-ruined aisles

still stand, to testify of a faith whose decay is nowhere more manifest than in Italy.

Out again from these cool silent shades we pass into the busy streets, avoiding collision as far as may be with mules and asses driven recklessly fast in tiny chaises along the paved and narrow lanes. The women are all attired in white cambric jackets, and white silk kerchiefs tied gracefully on their heads. An old beggar, in a dark, red gabardine, holds out his hand as we go by; indeed, beside every church-door sits a crowd, holding out countless hands in endless solicitation. In the Piazza, the stately figure of Neptune poises lightly in the air, wielding his trident in his upraised hands, to bear evidence of his maker John of Bologna's happy skill; and the cool plash of the great fountain beneath him falls pleasantly on our ears; for the sun is blazing, and thoughts of a *siesta* suggest themselves obtrusively.

But the Academy must be visited, where Raphael's St Cecilia stands rapt in ecstatic vision of all things lovely, as if to vindicate pure art against the later conceptions of it outspread upon these walls, in all the triumph of bared limbs and lovely faces and luscious colour, and utter irreligion. Guido Reni was the veritable victim of his time, and of the decadent taste which characterised it. His real power lies in the command he exercises over all the resources of his art. But his fine taste in colour is annulled by his evident desire to compose pictures which shall cover the walls of palaces, and be admired by wealthy cardinals and art-loving nobles. His 'Slaughter of the Innocents' is a fearful example of all that religious art should not be; while the matchless and exquisite beauty of his sweet dark-eyed 'St Catharine,' shows what lay in his power to achieve. But his century conquered him. He was not great enough to master and direct it, as his colossal predecessors in Art had done. The Caracci helped on the further decline of art by manufacturing a certain class of picture which forms the staple of, alas, how many galleries! Elizabeth Sirani shows a better aim. Her 'St Anthony of Padua' has a naive grace; and her execution is wonderful, when her youth is considered, as are also her efforts, compared with the gold-medalled students of modern Bologna, whose canvases provoke unkind criticism by their mannered pretension and vulgarity.

Some of Francia's most beautiful work is to be seen at Bologna. His rich colouring atones for the stiffness and rigidity that seem almost inseparable from the most real devotional element. Nevertheless, the tender grace of his little children and his saintly mothers fills us with a strange and secret delight, which greater men sometimes fail to inspire.

But the masterpiece of Bolognese art remains yet to be mentioned, and that is the *Arco* or shrine of St Dominic, within the church which bears his name. Sculptured and wrought by the faithful hands of Nicola Pisano, its bas-reliefs are so deep and rich that three distances may be distinguished in them. It is guarded by four most lovely angels at each corner, one of which is from the hand of Michael Angelo, and is kneeling in mute adoration. One feels, however, in contemplating this ravishing work,

that it is but the culminating stage of pure art, reached from the rude Lombard tombs in the Piazza, aided and developed by the fruitful genius of a mind like that of Pisano, nourished on the finest traditions of antique beauty. The tame and feeble bas-relief on the altar font, the work of the last century, instructively completes the tale, showing, when Art falls, the depth to which she can fall. Hence, in this day of ours, to know what to admire and how to admire it, is counted as an art, and they artistic who though themselves executing nothing, yet know by nature or cultivation how to discern the true from the false, the good from the bad.

The old Dominican friar who acted as escort to the shrine of his patron, spoke with a sigh of evil days, and of thirty 'fathers' dwindled to three; and a bare existence on sufferance in a free country, where the faith he professed is the one most bitterly hated and scorned by the powers that rule. The poor still crowd into the stately churches, and still cast themselves down in utter abandonment of devotion upon the marble floors, before the favourite shrine of Madonna or saint; but the rich, the educated, and the ruling classes, where are they?

The traveller will not be permitted to leave Bologna without seeing the Campo Santo, formerly the Certosa or Cistercian convent, but occupying the actual site of the Etruscan burial-ground. Hundreds of interments were found, each silent one lying, coin in mouth, ready to pay Charon's fee.

Amongst the endless sepulchral monuments which adorn these vast corridors, one statue, a Silence, is well deserving notice. He who lies beneath fell in a duel, in the flower of his youth. And there the figure sits, with finger on her lip, and hand upraised, as if to protect the dead. Let us follow her example, and raise no questions. He at anyrate has passed beyond the reach of our judgments. The same Campo Santo shows us, almost side by side, the tomb of the noble Bevinigni, so tranquil, so full of thought and repose, with the statued children in life-sized marble, in frilled garments and laced-up boots, and pinafores and hats, which the modern taste admires, and which are chiefly carved in the city where Pisano worked, and Francia painted, and Da Quercia and the great Michael left their works, to shame their successors in the noble arts. A final mention of the Olivetan Convent, now suppressed, outside the walls, and we have done. It is to-day a royal but uninhabited villa, and is as vast as it once was splendid. Perhaps it was not exactly very strict, for each brother kept a coach-and-pair, and the prior a coach with four white horses, in which the pious friars with great contentment drove abroad, when wearied with the contemplation of their palatial residence, with its many and indifferent works of art, and the lovely view thence obtainable of Bologna with her towers, pinnacles, and palaces lying outstretched beneath their vine-clad verdurous hill!

And so we leave Bologna *la Grassa* to her peaceful existence, her sausages, her excellent provision markets, and her unfeigned appreciation of the good things of this world. No lean and hungry Cassio she; but rather like the Justice, 'with good capon lined;' and perhaps

our next steps may lead us onwards to the Venice of our dreams, or the Florence of our waking imagination; or even to mightiest Rome, mother of nations, wolf-nurtured, sitting augustly upon her Seven Hills.

### A STRANGE STORY.

TOLD BY A LINCOLNSHIRE CLERGYMAN.

#### CHAPTER III.

It was dark when I drove up to Mr Pullingtoft's door; but as I descended from the dogcart and came within the range of light, with which he had hastened out to greet his visitor, it was with the exclamation of 'Bless my heart!' and a hearty grasp of the hand, that he recognised and welcomed me.

Mr Pullingtoft gave me no time for explanations; for as soon as I had removed my hat and greatcoat, he threw open the parlour-door and proudly announced me. Mrs Pullingtoft, who was in exact proportion to her husband, was seated near the lamp, darning little socks. She rose as I entered, and wheeled an easy-chair to the fire, begging me to be seated. Many children surrounded the table, the girls at needle-work, the boys colouring prints in the *Illustrated News*; while the farmer, holding up a well-thumbed book, informed me it was *Sandford and Merton*, from which he was reading to the young people the story of the Grateful Turk.

Among the busy heads round the table, there was one fair one that was lifted as I entered the room, and a familiar pair of blue eyes beamed modestly upon me. It was Phoebe Meadows. The young girl was so much improved in appearance, although very fair and delicate, that had I been unprepared for seeing her, I should not have recognised her; and it was evident that the worthy farmer had quite adopted her as his protégée, and treated her like one of his own children. My arrival caused the breaking-up of the juvenile party, who were sent off to bed. Mr Pullingtoft, however, would not hear a word of the business upon which I had come, until we had had supper.

After this hospitable entertainment, Mrs Pullingtoft discreetly withdrew; my host heaped up the fire, and drawing our chairs closer in, I unfolded the tale of my memorable night's adventure to the good man, who listened with open mouth and open eyes; but when I came to the events of a few hours ago, namely, the finding of the will, who can describe his astonishment and delight? I opened and smoothed out the crumpled pages on the table, the farmer reading it attentively word by word; he had been familiar with old Scruby's signature, and firmly declaring the will to be genuine, bestowed an unlimited number of choice epithets on the son. In vain I tried to convince him that a man may not be called bad until he be proven so. Mr Pullingtoft emphatically declared Seth Scruby to be a knave. 'And not only that, sir, but a villain!'—with a slap of his fist on the table that made the glasses dance and jingle.

Of course I stayed all night; and during the

evening I had again to relate my experiences in the church on the night of the farmer's first visit to me, with the slamming-to of what I took to be Scruby's pew-door—the seeing of it shut, and afterwards open—and the banging of the church-door as after some one who had just gone out; and to this narrative my host listened with renewed attention.

'It may have been Scruby himself,' he cried excitedly. 'It was Tuesday se'night as I visited you on, and it was on that very day Scruby and his family arrived at Coryton Farm. He must have heard that I was thinking of doing something to get back for Phoebe what was her mother's, and taken this means of putting the will out of sight till the storm should blow over.'

I could not, however, agree with this view of the matter. Had Mr Scruby wished to hide the will, he would not have stuck it in at the back of an ornament on the church reading-desk, where the first pew-cleaner who came along to dust the desk could not have failed to see it.

On the following morning, after having carefully pasted together the pieces of the will, we drove over to Grantham to see Mr Shaw the solicitor, and have his opinion of the document that had come so strangely into my possession. He was a well-known, shrewd lawyer, of integrity beyond suspicion, and having many years before succeeded his father in his business, was better acquainted with the affairs of the squires and farmers within a wide circle of miles, than many of them were themselves. I think it would have been impossible to have brought Mr Shaw a greater treat than that soiled document, regarding the finding of which I gave him full particulars. Like the bloodhound scenting blood, or a red Indian finding a trail, he pounced upon the will. He looked at it upside down, held it up to the light, studied it; and finally unlocking a box of deeds, produced a parchment drawn up in the same handwriting, being that of the dead and gone Boston solicitor who had drawn up old Scruby's will. He had no hesitation in pronouncing the document genuine, and thought we ought to see Mr Scruby without loss of time.

It was resolved, therefore, that we should all three start for Coryton early next morning; and as I had a decided objection to entering Mr Scruby's house a second time, it was arranged that Mr Scruby should be summoned to the vicarage, to meet Mr Shaw of Grantham on particular business.

It was about noon next day when, on arriving at Coryton, we despatched a messenger to the Farm. Fortunately, Mr Scruby was at home; and he very promptly made his appearance, actuated, no doubt, by curiosity as to what the business could be, and with a lurking suspicion, probably, that it again concerned Phoebe Meadows. If so, he was right in his forebodings. What awaited him in reality, he little guessed. He entered my study with his face all puckered and pinched into a set hardness; and his shrewd eye glanced inquiringly at our faces, as we politely made our salutations. Mr Shaw plunged into the heart of the business by suddenly laying the will open before him on the table, simply saying: 'Do you recognise this document, Mr Scruby?'



Never shall I forget the expression of the man's face, as his eyes fell on those faded sheets of paper! To our watchful eyes, it was sufficient confirmation of his guilt. We saw that he recognised it. Horror, fear, dismay, succeeded each other over a leaden-coloured countenance. The struggle was dreadful to witness; and yet the man's habitual self-command was so great, that in less time than it takes to relate this, he actually composed his features to their ordinary grimness, and boldly and firmly replied 'No!'

'I must beg of you to examine it with attention and care, Mr Scruby,' said our lawyer, never taking his spectacled eyes from his face, 'and give us your opinion upon it; for we firmly believe it is the will of your late father.'

'My father left no will,' said Mr Scruby fiercely; 'and I refuse to read this forgery, for such it is.'

'Take care what you say, Mr Scruby. I affirm it to be a perfectly legal document, drawn up by my old friend the late Mr Collyer, the well-known solicitor of Boston, with whose handwriting you must be well acquainted, seeing he managed your father's affairs for so many years. I beg you to examine it.'

'I deny the existence of a will altogether,' said Mr Scruby; but as he said the words, I remarked that his hand, which rested on the table, trembled, in spite of his efforts to appear calm.

'See!' continued Mr Shaw; 'here is your father's signature, and those of the witnesses—namely, Thomas Kirby and Mary Greenwood.'

'Thomas Kirby, indeed!' cried Mr Scruby scornfully; 'a paltry farm-bailiff, that I had to turn away for drunkenness; and Mary Greenwood, a half-blind, half-deaf, old housekeeper, who died crazy. Pretty witnesses you have brought forward, truly!'

'Doubtless, they were the only available ones at the time.'

'It is a deep-laid conspiracy,' he cried furiously, as he moved towards the door. 'I see through it all. I deny your statements. Go to law, if you like, and I'll fight you inch by inch.' And seizing his hat, Mr Scruby strode from the room, casting on us a withering look of contempt, expressing that he had unmasked a set of rogues, and fathomed their plot.

'Let him go to law,' exclaimed Mr Shaw, rubbing his hands with satisfaction; 'I desire nothing better.—And now, my dear sir, as time flies, may I ask you to introduce the witnesses one by one, if they are here yet, that I may take down their depositions. I hope you have summoned the old woman Kirby as well; I must have a talk with her, before I go.'

'I have sent for her,' I said; 'she must be here by this time.'

The schoolmaster was the first to enter the room; and he gave a clear account of meeting me accidentally in the churchyard, accompanying me into the church, and the subsequent finding of the will. The sexton, carpenter, and Mrs Dumps followed one by one, and corroborated each other's testimony in every respect. During this time, old Mrs Kirby had been thawing at the kitchen fire. I therefore hoped she would prove more communicative on this occasion than I had previously found her.

Mr Shaw had his own way of opening his

campaigns; and I perceived it was his tactics to come down suddenly on people, to open fire in an unexpected manner, taking them by surprise; by which means he gave no time to invent answers, and very often lighted upon the truth at once. He commenced with the old woman exactly in the same way as with Mr Scruby, by placing the paper bearing the signatures open before her on the table; and laying his finger below that of her husband, asked her if she knew that writing. Mrs Kirby, putting on her spectacles, peered into the writing, and I saw the old withered hand that leant on the table tremble. She gave a quick look over the top of her glasses at the lawyer, and murmured in a low anxious voice: 'Then, it's found at last!'

She and Mr Shaw looked straight at each other in silence—a silence that was significant; for from that moment they arrived at a very clear understanding, without the aid of words. Then the old woman sank back in the arm-chair I placed for her, and the poor wrinkled hands shook perceptibly.

'You recognise your husband's signature then, Mrs Kirby, and unless I am much mistaken, seem to be aware to what document it is attached?'

'I do—I do!' replied the old woman, to the lawyer's question. 'And if you knew—if you only knew what I, and he who's gone, suffered along of that will—for I know it is the lost will—it broke my poor old man's heart; and mine, sir—and mine!'

The icy barrier that had surrounded this woman for so many years, was disappearing. For once, she shed tears. I offered her some wine, which she rejected.

'Wait till I've told my story all through,' said she, 'and then maybe I shall be glad enough of it.—You must know,' she began, addressing Mr Shaw, 'that I was not always the poverty-stricken woman I now am. I was in my younger days as comfortable as I could wish to be. My husband was farm-bailiff to old Mr Scruby, and that nice house at North End was our home. Mr Scruby had been a schoolmate of my husband; and though lifted up, through making money like dirt, yet he wasn't a bad-hearted man, though awful passionate; and having an old friendship for my husband, he sent for him, and offered him the place. And many and many a year we lived on good terms—till his death, I may say. Well, sir, as you know, the old gentleman had only two children—this man Seth, and the daughter—poor Jane. He brought her up quite like a lady—in silk gowns, and a gold chain round her neck. He loved her like the core of his heart; for she was so pretty, so affectionate, but wilful and spoilt-like; and at last he saw he must send her to school; for the poor girl had no mother, sir, and ran rather wild at home; and it was quite time she went, for she was twelve years old. So she was sent to Lincoln; and came home three or four times a year for holidays; and every time she was improved, and was growing prettier and prettier.

'Soon after she first went, her father had a bad attack of gout, so bad, that he set about making his will. One day, when my husband came home, he told me that he had been over to Boston to bring Mr Collyer, for the old gentleman was making his will. Now, Mr Scruby



thought much of my husband, and was more confidential with him than anybody; and after the will had been signed, he told him he'd left all his property in this parish, and half his bank-money, to Jane, and she'd be one of the richest girls in these parts; and that my old man had been a witness to the will, as was also old Mrs Greenwood, who'd been his housekeeper many a year, ay, ever since the death of poor Jane's mother. Bad luck it was that those two were the only two handy, at that time; for, you see, they're both dead! Well, sir, I didn't only hear this from my husband, but from Mr Scruby himself; for one Sunday afternoon, when the old gentleman was mending, I went to sit with him, while Mrs Greenwood went to church. He was always chatty and friendly to me; and after we'd talked of his illness, and what a mercy it was he hadn't been taken, we talked of his daughter; and then he gave me the key of an old bureau that was in his room, and told me to open it, look in one of the pigeon-holes, and bring him a roll of paper, tied with a red string. And I did; and he read me what he had left Jane, for she was ever uppermost in his mind; then he said: "Collyer said that it was not law to leave witnesses any legacy;" but he hoped he'd done as well; and pointing with his finger, he made me read, that he had set down for his son Seth to keep my husband for his farm-bailiff for life; and to keep Mrs Greenwood also, or provide for her. And I read those words, gentlemen, in that very will!

(It was true—words to that effect were there.)

'Well, sirs,' continued the old dame, 'that made my life seem happier still, for we were provided for life. For other six years all went well, and then troubles began. Jane had a lover, a handsome young fellow she had met and danced with at some parties in Lincoln—the son of a farmer near Spalding, who was a cousin of my own. Mr Scruby did not like the notion of his daughter marrying at all so young; but at that time he hadn't any particular dislike to Edward Meadows, though he would not hear of an engagement. But sad to tell, my cousin was burned out one night in winter—his farm, his stock, all burned to the ground; and he wasn't insured; for he was an obstinate man, and old-fashioned in his notions; and when folks had told him he was tempting Providence not to insure his stock at least, would cry: "How can any fire happen here, with all this water and all these ponds close to the house? Why, we should put it out in no time!" But the fire did come—in weather like this, when all the ponds were frozen—and he was ruined. He had some money left in the Boston Bank; and with this he tried to start again in a small way; but the old man had no heart left, so of course he failed, and was soon a bankrupt; and then he broke down altogether, and died.

'Well, sir, after that, Mr Scruby would not allow his daughter to think of young Meadows at all; and indeed he was no match for her; and my husband and I thought so too, although he was a relative of our own; and we would not let him stay long in our house when he came over to see us, and did everything we could not to encourage these two foolish young people; for we were under obligations of much kindness to Mr Scruby, and would not run contrary to him; and it would have

been a shabby return, knowing how his money was left, to make up a match between a rich girl and our penniless relation. But in spite of all, Jane was headstrong. It was generous of her too, poor girl. She declared that she had loved Edward in his prosperous days, and refused to break off with him when he was in adversity. I think, perhaps if these young people had waited, it might have come about in a few years; for her father loved her too well not to have given in at last. But, gentlemen, they did not wait; for as soon as she was twenty-one, when old Mr Scruby had gone to London on business, Edward Meadows got a license, and they came one morning to this church to be married. Mr Willock was the vicar, and though very much put out at having to marry them, he couldn't refuse to perform the ceremony; and yet, when he saw nobody with them, was sure it must be a wrong thing. So he sent post-haste for us, sir—my husband and I—to come immediately to the church; for we were relations of the bridegroom, and so would be respectable witnesses. You might have knocked me down with a feather, when we came to the church and found those two young people standing there, quite thoughtless of the wrong they were doing. We all begged and implored them to think of Mr Scruby; but Jane declared her father would forgive them when it was done and they were once married—and seemed to have no fear; so there was no help for it; and with heavy hearts, my husband and I saw the ceremony, and signed our names as witnesses—signed our own death-warrants, as I may say. We were dreadfully frightened at the part we had played; and my husband thought it best to start directly for London, and tell the bad news to Mr Scruby himself. The rage and sorrow of the old gentleman were awful. He tore down here like a madman, and went on like a madman, and turned Jane out of doors when she came to ask forgiveness, vowing he would never see her again. He never did.

'He blamed us, and blamed Mr Willock, more than he'd a right to; for how could we help ourselves? However, we were all very sorry for him, poor man, but thought he'd soften after a time to his only daughter; and so, I think, he would, only his son was furious against his sister and the match she'd made; and against us, who, he declared, had connived at it, and brought it about. We expected to be turned away; but old Mr Scruby was, you see, a just man at the bottom of his nature, and though never friendly-like with us again, did not take away our livelihood. But it did not last long. In less than two years, Mr Scruby was dead; and we heard that his son came into everything, as his daughter had been disinherited. It was the talk of everybody that no will had been produced. Mr Collyer had died a week before Mr Scruby; and my husband and I had notice to quit North End Cottage, Mr Seth saying my husband was always tipsy, and he would not have an intemperate man for his farm-bailiff, though his father had put up with him so many years. And so—and so, we had to begin the world over again. In vain we told him how we had witnessed a will, in which Jane was left a mint of money, and we were provided for. No; it was no use. No will whatever had been found, he said; he was confident his father had

destroyed it, when his sister so wickedly married. "Much good you and your husband got by it, when you got up that match," said he with a sneer.

'Mr Seth was not married then, yet he turned away old Mrs Greenwood, to make room for a malapert hussy who was hardly thought good enough to milk cows in his father's time. Poor Mrs Greenwood went to live with some relations, where she soon afterwards died. She could not bear to think of her place being filled by Madge Ralston—sister of old Miles who lives in the cottage at the pond. A bad un she always was, that Madge, as we and many others know to our cost. Not long after this, Seth married his first wife, who got a good word from every one who knew her, and would have been kind to us old folk, had Seth allowed her.

'But I must go on with my story. After we were turned out, my husband got work, first in one part of the country, then another; but he never held up his head again, and we sank lower and lower. At last, we came back to this village, as he was best known here, and had a lease of that poor little place of two rooms that I live in now. There he died. And there I received Edward Meadows, when wasting with consumption, and poor dear Phoebe, his helpless child.'

'And what had become of Jane, then?' asked Mr Shaw.

'O sir, she went to her grave five months after her father, broken-hearted. Poor Edward Meadows had worked for her hard; but he got ill, and broke down at last. He had turned his hand to anything that came in his way. First, he broke horses and went to cattle-fairs for the farmers; then he took to keeping accounts for the shopkeepers at Northampton. But Jane's death finished him; and he came to me as his nearest relation, begging me to bring up his poor little child. And there, sirs, that is all—you have the complete history of a ruined family, if ever there was one!'

'And what did you imagine had become of the will that old Mr Scruby showed you?'

'I thought his son destroyed it. Yes, gentlemen, I thought ill enough of Seth for that—heaven forgive me for wronging him! Seeing it is in your hands, convinces me how bad I have been.—But where did this will come from? Who had it all the time?'

'It was found hidden away,' I replied. 'Who hid it, we do not yet pretend to say.'

'It was only natural I should think Seth destroyed it,' said the old woman; 'for oh! he is a hard man, never to inquire how his sister died, or about her little child. You have often asked me why I did not come oftener to church'—turning to me—'but it did me no good—no good! I saw that cruel man prosperous, praying; and the child poor, barely clothed, and only the care a poor old creature like me could give her; and it made me angry instead of humble; and I said to myself, instead of praying: "Why does not a judgment overtake that man? Why does he flourish?" And so my heart would keep on burning within me.'

This was the account given by the old woman. Its truthfulness was apparent, and her version of some of the contents of the will exact; and

Mr Shaw and I were more than ever convinced that there had been foul-play on the part of some one.

### SUDDEN DEAFNESS.

WHAT part of the human frame is more exquisitely and mysteriously formed than the ear, with its delicate auditory nerve; with its hundreds of branches, so minute, that they can with difficulty be even microscopically examined; the sound-cells, or arches of Corti, about three thousand in number; its wondrous telephonic system, far more certain and perfect than anything man's ingenuity can ever hope to fashion? Each part is so perfect, yet so frail, that a very slight shock, a trifling accident, may injure some portion; and upon the sound, healthy condition of each part depends the whole power of hearing. Even nowadays, when so many clever men have made the ear their study, we find two of the most clever among them agreeing that, as regards 'the mode in which the ultimate subdivisions of the auditory nerve are distributed upon the lining membrane of the labyrinth, it does not seem possible to give a certain account'—so various are the opinions.

Certainly, our forefathers knew little about this portion of the human frame, or such a punishment as boxing the ears would never have been thought of for a moment; and it seems almost incredible that in these days of severer mental cultivation, when even the mistress of a village school is supposed to be able to teach her pupils about the human form divine, such an action should be possible as that brought last year against a school-mistress for using this punishment. Nevertheless, that this ignorance exists is plain, from the fact that the tradition of earwigs creeping into people's ears, and laying their eggs there, is still fully believed in by the lower classes; and a curious case came before the writer's notice only a few years ago. A village schoolmistress took her child, which had become deaf, to have its ears syringed. As she was leaving, after the disagreeable little operation was over, she said very anxiously: 'I suppose, Doctor, the water will come out of his head presently.' Evidently she thought that otherwise there would be a certainty of water on the brain.

But the purpose of this paper is to give three or four curious cases of deafness, caused by grief or sudden fright. They are all perfectly true.

A lady who, just before the Peninsular war, had been married, heard suddenly and quite unexpectedly, that her husband had been ordered out to the seat of war. So great was her horror, that she became instantaneously and perfectly deaf, remaining so for many months; and it was feared that her case was incurable. Some months later, she was in church on a Sunday morning. The congregation began to sing a hymn, and quite suddenly her hearing returned, so much to her surprise, that, forgetting where she was, she jumped up and called out: 'Why, bless me, I can hear as well as ever I could in my life.' She retained her powers of hearing to a good old age.

Some years ago, in a country village which lies between Bath and Bridgewater, we used to see an old woman being wheeled along the dusty

roads by a workhouse child, in a primitive carriage formed by putting wheels on one of those heavy, green, wooden tea-garden or bar-room chairs—a most cumbrous and primitive contrivance. By the side of the chair, occasionally helping to push the heavy vehicle, walked an elderly woman, who looked robust and hale enough; but we discovered that she was stone-deaf, and the invalid sister had to shout at her in a most exhausting manner. We made the acquaintance of this worthy couple, and one day the deaf sister told us the cause of her privation. When about twelve years old, she had typhus fever very severely, and at length fell into a trance-like faint, which was taken by all for death. She was laid in her coffin, being unable to give any sign of life, but hearing quite plainly all that was going on. Just as her friends were about to close down the coffin-lid, from sheer horror she revived, but only to find herself stone-deaf, and she never recovered her hearing. Typhus fever so often produces deafness, that some may attribute this loss of hearing to that fearful complaint; but she does not appear to have lost it until the coffin-lid was being closed; and nothing in this world can be more utterly terrifying and shocking to the nerves, than the knowledge that one is being buried alive.

A poor lady, governess in a family, was standing one day in the hall when one of the children of the house, who was sliding on the banisters, fell over them, and was killed at her feet. The poor lady, from horror, became immediately perfectly deaf.

Perhaps one of the most curious cases is that of a child of seven, apparently quite strong and healthy, who seems to have actually become deaf from the effects of nightmare. The story is worth telling here, if only in the hope that it may make some reader less eager to despise childish night-terrors. How often nurses, and even mothers, and those very loving and tender ones, try to scold a child out of these night alarms, 'foolish' as they call them; yet how many are there of their elders who have not experienced such terrors?

There had been great Fifth-of-November riots in one of our south country towns. Men in hideous masks had patrolled the usually quiet streets; two citizens, who had offended their fellow-town-folk, were burned in effigy; and of course there was the regular accompaniment of squibs and crackers, and in the end a tremendous street disturbance, needing the intervention of the police. So alarming and annoying had the disturbance been to quietly minded citizens, that it was resolved never to allow a Fifth of November to be observed again in the town; and great was the rejoicing in quiet households over this decision of the town-council. A few days before the return of the fateful day, some children had been playing happily together, and, as far as can be discovered, nothing had been said or done to alarm any of them. They went to bed as usual, but had not been long in the dark when the youngest, a little girl, ran into her elder brother's room, and exclaimed: 'Oh, I feel so frightened, I can't help thinking of the Fifth of November; and when I shut my eyes, I see those horrid masks, and I can't get to sleep.'

The brother was very gentle and tender with her. He assured her there would be nothing done

in the town on the fifth, and carried her back to bed, telling her she must be good, and remain there, and that no harm would happen to her. A few minutes after, she ran back to his room, again describing her utter terror; she could not help seeing those dreadful masks, and she felt so dreadfully frightened.

Again he took her back to bed, and tried to coax her to sleep, with apparent success; but after a little while, she ran down to her mother, exclaiming: 'O mamma, I feel so dreadfully frightened, I cannot help seeing those horrid masks; and I wish papa would come home and syringe my ears, for I am quite deaf.'

The mother took her on her knee, and coaxed and fondled her till she fell asleep; then she took her to bed, and waited in much anxiety for her husband's return. She told him of the child's dreadfully excited state, and took him up to see her; but she was sleeping so placidly, it seemed a pity to wake her. Sleep was the best medicine.

Next morning, when she woke, they discovered to their horror that the child was stone-deaf; and not only has she remained deaf ever since, but being so young at the time of her affliction, she has also become almost quite dumb. Evidently the sound of her own voice in her head was most painful to her. Sudden, abrupt noises she could still hear. No doubt, she would be able to derive some benefit from one of the new inventions—the audiphone—for enabling the deaf to hear, from the vibration of sounds conducted from the teeth to the ear; but all efforts to restore her hearing have been useless. The injury to this tiny, imperceptible nerve had so affected all the rest, that the idea of being examined by a doctor seemed entirely to unbinge the child. Some of the cleverest aurists of the day were consulted. All advised the same: 'Leave her alone. Any effort to conquer these fears, is only likely to increase the injury to the nerves. Time may cure it; nothing else will.'

## MY AUNT'S TALE.

### A REMINISCENCE OF THE DAYS OF BYRON.

WELL, young folks, you must know that while your grandfather was in command of a brigade during the Mahratta war of 1816-20, I met my mother in England for the first time since I was a baby; for like most children born in India, I was sent 'home' to be educated, when I was very young. I was then past fourteen, but though *petite*, looked even older. I had one brother, named Willie—your father; but he was several years my junior. My mother was an accomplished lady, and, upon her return from India, resolved that I and my brother should receive a continental education.

Accompanied by my mother and my brother Willie, we left England, and on the 1st October 1818 reached Paris by slow stages, without mishap or adventure. There we halted several days, to see the sights; and thence travelled to Lausanne, and on to Brugg, afterwards visiting the Valley of Martigny. We were a very pleasant party, and did not hurry ourselves. On the day appointed for crossing the



Simplon, although the early morning was very fine and clear, the stars shining brightly in the sky, and not a breath of air stirring, our host at the inn strongly urged us not to proceed, as he was sure there would be a heavy snow-storm. Thinking he was dissuading us from personal motives, we determined to go on; but two other parties who were there at the same time remained behind. We had not proceeded far, when, sure enough, a few flakes of snow began to fall; and very soon afterwards the first storm of the season burst upon us. As the horses attached to our carriage could not drag it along with us inside, we had to dismount, and walk close behind the diligence. As we ascended, not a soul was allowed to speak; even the bells were taken off the horses, for fear of bringing down avalanches. As it was, we saw several both in front and in rear of us, thundering down the mountain-sides, and disappearing in the precipices below. So heavy was the fall of snow, we could not see many yards ahead; and our carriage several times nearly toppled over in turning the sharp curves of the roadway. We reached the chalet or place of refuge about five P.M., and found a party of five or six, who had come from Italy, belated like ourselves. The chalet consisted of only two small rooms; and in addition to twelve or fourteen travellers, there were a man and his wife in charge; hence, how to provide accommodation for so many was a puzzle. The horses were duly placed in an outer shed; and as we had neither beds nor bedding, and but few wraps, some of the straw intended for them was brought in for our use; and bears being numerous, it was necessary to barricade both the stable and our own doors. Our next difficulty was the commissariat. As both parties were confident they could get through the Pass during the day, they had brought no food with them. All we could get from the chalet-keeper were two small chickens, two small loaves of black bread, an onion, and a little cream-cheese.

A German Count, his wife, daughter, and lady's-maid, were among the benighted. He carved the chickens into as many pieces as there were people present. We each got about an inch square of meat. I was ravenously hungry; but I never could eat black bread, onions, or cream-cheese, so mine was almost a Barmecide's feast. We spread the straw in the two rooms—to the smaller of which the gentlemen retired; whilst in the larger, we ladies huddled together for warmth. My mother sat by the fire all night and kept up a blaze, without which, we should have been frozen to death. The Countess had a large feather coverlet, which she desired her maid to offer to any of us who would accept it; but we all declined with thanks. She then told the maid she had better lie down and cover herself with it; to which the maid impertinently replied that she 'was not going to sleep on dirty straw.'

'What will you do, then?' demanded the Countess. 'Surely, if we can lie on straw, you can too.'

The maid, with a toss of her head, replied: 'You are travelling for your pleasure, and can do as you like; but as I am forced to accompany you, whether I like it or not, to gain my livelihood, I shall not do so.'

'What will you do, then?' again asked the Countess.

'I shall sleep in the carriage,' replied the maid.

The chalet-keeper, who had overheard this from the adjoining room, called out in French: 'Pray, do not allow her to do so, as bears are very numerous; and once the doors are bolted, they cannot be opened again till daylight, and the probability, nay, certainty, will be that she will be killed.'

But the maid persisted in her intention. The diligence was dragged up close to the chalet, and she got in. The carriage was fortunately very strong, with double doors and windows, the outer ones being of panel. These were securely fastened inside by the maid, and outside by the chalet-keeper. The doors, then, of our own apartment were barred inside and bolted. We ladies lay down on the dirty straw, using such wraps as we possessed for covering; but the cold was intense, and the fire, straw, and covering were only sufficient to keep us alive. Sleep was impossible. The night was pitchy dark; but the snow ceased soon after dark.

About eleven P.M. we heard sniffing and scratching at the door, and my mother nervously whispered to me: 'Bears!' which indeed they proved to be. In a very short time these unwelcome visitors made a determined effort to get in; but luckily the door was a very strong one, well fastened; and though they tried over and over again, it resisted their attempts. They then tried to get at the horses in the shed; but here again they were foiled, though the horses became much alarmed, and snorted and kicked for the rest of the night. Next we heard piercing shrieks from the maid; but to help her was impossible. None of the gentlemen were armed; nor could the doors be unbarred, as there were so many helpless ladies present. The shrieks became fainter and fainter, and at last ceased; and we knew not what the fate of the maid had been. The bears made violent efforts to get in either into the shed or into our apartments the whole night long, keeping us in a state of terror; but fortunately they were unsuccessful. At last, greatly to our relief, with the daylight the bears disappeared, and upon the doors being unbolted, their tracks were visible, not only at the doors, but all round the chalet. Under and round the carriage, the panels were scratched all over by their claws in their endeavours to get in; and the maid was discovered more dead than alive. Fortunately, unconsciousness had intervened soon after the bears' attack, and relieved her of her miseries and fears; but she declared she could feel the animals rubbing themselves underneath the carriage, climbing up to the roof, and that their very breath came in through the cracks in the doorways. It was a lesson on selfishness and obstinacy, which she probably never forgot.

Soon a large party of men appeared, and cleared the snow off the track. We got safely to the top of the Pass, and down to the village of Simplon, where we breakfasted; and thankful we were too, to get something to eat—the first, we may say, for thirty-six hours. We went down merrily in sledges to the village of Domo d'Ossola, on the Italian side, which in its bright-



ness and regularity more resembled a tropical clime than the icy regions we had passed over. Here we halted a few days, and then visited Turin, Milan, and Florence. In the last city, we resided at a large boarding establishment, kept by a Madame du Planti, in a house which had formerly been Madame de Staël's, in the Via Scala. There were some thirty boarders in this house; and here we remained two years, occupied with our studies.

During a part of this time, the poet Shelley, his wife and infant, were inmates of the same house; and we soon made their acquaintance. They were very kind to us; and Shelley proposed to mamma, that if she would accompany them to Pisa, where Lord Byron was resident, he would himself undertake William's education; but mamma declined, saying she was fearful her husband would be displeased if she allowed an intimacy between her family and Lord Byron's. (Indeed, she was half afraid he would not approve of our friendship with Shelley and his wife.) During my leisure hours, I was always in the Shelleys' apartments. The poet would place his infant in my lap, and bid me amuse myself with a live doll, whilst he continued his writing. Both Shelley and his wife were delightful; and when they left, some months afterwards, we were very sorry. One day, Shelley told me Lord Byron was coming next day to visit him. In vain I implored mamma to let me be with them when the great poet came; but she would not hear of it. I told Shelley this with tears in my eyes; and he said: 'Well, little woman, if mamma won't let you be in the same room with the ogre; if you are very anxious to see him, look through the keyhole, and I will place him so that you shall have a full view of him.' So, next day, Willie and I went on tiptoe to Shelley's door, and peeped through the keyhole. We were so fascinated, alternately watching the great poet, that we remained there some time. At last, Byron began to fidget, and said: 'I say, Shelley, I don't know how it is, but I feel as if some one was watching me.' Shelley smiled; and pointing to the door, told him what we were doing, and who we were, and also that mamma would not allow us to make his acquaintance. 'I had no idea,' said the poet, 'I bore such a very bad name. I should be very glad to know the young people, and their mother too, if she would permit it.' He then got up and came towards the door; but we fled down the passage, whilst he and Shelley stood laughing. That was the first and last I saw of Byron.

From Florence we went to Rome, and stayed there six months. Here I received my first offer of marriage. Viscount B— was very rich, but rather elderly, and a widower, and asked mamma for my hand. She did not know what to do. I did not care a bit for him; but whilst mamma was in doubt, the English ambassador called on her, and said: 'If not taking too great a liberty, might I ask if it is true that the Viscount B— is a suitor for your daughter's hand?' Mamma said: 'Yes; but I don't know what to say.' 'Then,' replied the ambassador, 'do not let her have anything to say to him; for though enormously rich, he bears a very bad name; and as he is a dangerous enemy, take my advice, and leave Rome quickly.'

So at an early date we quitted Rome for Naples. Willie had bought a pistol; but the driver of the diligence begged it might be taken away and hidden; for if we came across bandits, and any resistance was made, all our throats would be cut. A short while before, a party of brigands had entered a boys' school, and had carried away some twelve or thirteen of the scholars, for whom they demanded a large ransom. The parents foolishly sent the money by some soldiers; and the ruffians suspecting treachery, beheaded the hapless boys, and stuck their heads on poles; where they still were, when we passed by. Near Portella, on the frontiers of Naples, the driver pointed out some objects, still far distant, which he declared were bandits making for us. He dared not go out of a walk, for fear of being shot at; but he said, as it was dusk, one of us might get away unperceived, and go to an outpost of the Austrians, not more than a mile away. So Willie and I ran on as fast as we could, keeping close to the hedge, and reached the guard more dead than alive, and made them understand we needed their assistance to save our party from capture by brigands. Twenty-five men at once hastened back, and were just in time, for the diligence had been brought to a stand-still by a couple of robbers. The main body, however, was still at some distance, and on seeing the soldiers, decamped. The soldiers fired a few shots, to hasten their movements. We had to pay rather heavily for this assistance, as we had to give each soldier a present; but we were thankful to be out of the scrape.

Our troubles were not at an end yet; for on the police at the frontier demanding our passports, we found only mamma's and Willie's name entered, mine having been omitted by mistake. What to do, we did not know, as the guard would not allow me to pass with the rest; whereupon, I boldly declared I was the wife of one of the Austrian officers who had preceded us. I was then permitted to go on, accompanied by gendarmes; and we entered the first large café we came to, where there were numerous Austrian officers lounging about. Austria had just then occupied Naples; and of course the Austrians, especially the soldiery, were supreme. We sat down at the first table. I had tears in my eyes, and both mamma and Willie looked troubled. The gendarme stood outside. At last an officer came up to us, and said: 'Pardon, Madame, but if I am not mistaken, you are strangers and in trouble. I am the Commandant C—, and shall be happy to be of assistance to you in any way.'

Mamma explained our difficulty, and the ruse I had adopted to get beyond the barrier. The Commandant laughed, and said: 'Mon Dieu, Mademoiselle, I am too old to pass myself off as the husband of so charming a young lady; and moreover, everybody knows I have a wife and children, or I should only be too proud of the honour! But I will see what can be done.'

He then went to a table where there were many officers, and we heard much merriment. At last, a young officer came up, and offering me his arm, said: 'Permit me the happiness of being of assistance to Mademoiselle, and to

personate for a few brief but happy moments the rôle of husband; and putting my arm into his, he led me up to the gendarme, and said: 'This is Madame. That will do. You can return to your post.'

The man saluted, and went away; whilst my liberator took me back to our table, and left me with many bows and polite speeches.

We remained two years in Naples, and were the best of friends with the Austrian soldiers, who were a fine and gentlemanly set of men.

The Commandant took an especial fancy to William, and persuaded mamma to let him enter the Austrian service, which he did as a common soldier for six months, and then he got his commission as cadet. He got to like the service very much; and when papa wrote that we were all to return to India, and that he had got a cadetship for Willie in the East India service, he begged to be allowed to remain where he was. The Austrian government offered him a Lieutenant's commission at once, if he would remain; but papa would not hear of it, as he was now a general officer, and had sufficient interest in India to push William on. So poor Willie had to throw up his commission, and to return with us to London.

Six months after our return to England, we embarked for India; but I was so ill, that I could not proceed; consequently, mamma and I were landed at the first place we touched at, whilst Willie went on alone.

I was married soon afterwards. Papa had got his off-reckonings, and had returned home for good; so mamma joined him there; whilst your father followed his career in India. The rest you know.

#### THE MANUFACTURE OF FABRICATED WINE.

THE increasing use and production of fabricated wines in Switzerland are giving rise, says a Geneva correspondent of the *Times*, to serious apprehensions, if not to actual panic, among the vineyard proprietors of the western districts of the country. The prosperity of several cantons is based either wholly or in part on the success of viticulture, and anything that threatens to hinder the production or curtail the consumption of wine, naturally creates great alarm. The canton of Geneva alone, which possesses only fifty-six thousand acres of cultivable land—vine-lands included—produces wine of an estimated value of four million francs yearly. The present trouble comes neither from phylloxera nor mildew, neither from frost nor hail, but from the competition of *fabricated* wine with the genuine article, and the seeming impossibility of meeting this competition. Adulterated wine can be dealt with. It is easily detected; it is injurious to health, and immense quantities of deleterious stuff are every year confiscated and destroyed. But the merely fabricated article contains all the constituents of real wine, and the most careful analyst can find nothing in it that he does not find in the fermented juice of the grape. It is composed of ninety per cent. of water, five to six per cent. of alcohol, and four to five per cent. of tannin. The water, which costs the viticulturist as much as any other of the constituents of wine, costs

the fabricator next to nothing; the tannin and the alcohol he extracts from imported raisins. Thus the liquor he concocts can be sold by the maker at the low price of about one shilling and twopence a gallon, and still make a handsome profit. The retailer sells it at about double the maker's price, his profits thereon being probably five or six times more than he gains by the sale of naturally prepared wine. Nor is this all. Experiments are being made with a view to finding a chemical substitute for the raisins used in the manufacture; in which event, fabricated wine could be produced at a cost little exceeding that of slightly alcoholised water, and viticulture would be as utterly ruined as madder cultivation has been ruined by the discovery of the alizarine process of Turkey-red dyeing.

The making of wine artificially, dates in the canton of Geneva from the time when the phylloxera began its ravages among the vineyards of France, and it has now become an extensive and profitable trade. The difficulty of putting it down, especially in Switzerland, where the constitution guarantees the fullest liberty of commerce, seems almost insuperable. There is no law whereby a man can be prevented from manufacturing an article which he calls fabricated wine, and selling it to whomsoever will buy. Many customers of the retailers of it are, doubtless, under the impression that the liquor served out to them is wine and nothing but wine. How are they to know that it is not? If one of them, more suspicious than the rest, takes a sample to the public analyst, he will simply be told that it contains all the constituents of good wine, and no substance that good wine ought not to contain.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising to learn that the proprietors and peasants of the district, almost every one of whom is more or less interested in the culture of the vine, should demand the intervention of the State, and have petitioned the local government to devise means for the suppression of a trade which 'seriously menaces the dearest interests of our agriculture.' As proof of the reality of the evil to which they draw attention, the petitioners mention that, albeit the last vintage was less productive than usual, the price of wine is under the average of previous years. This result they attribute altogether to the competition of the chemical wine manufacturers. 'It is hard,' says the correspondent above quoted, 'to see what the local government can do. Without an amendment of the federal constitution, they have no power to put down either the manufacture in question or any other; and even if it were put down, the fabricators would only have to cross the border, concoct their compounds in Savoy or the French Jura, and introduce them into Switzerland as, say, a mixture of alcohol and water. This might increase the cost of production, but it would not extinguish the trade. The difficulty might perhaps in some measure be met by imposing on the manufacture a moderate excise duty; but as this expedient would also involve a breach of the constitution, it is equally out of the question. The problem presented to the Genevan Council of State is assuredly one which it will tax all their ingenuity to solve.'

But Switzerland is not the only vine-growing

country that is suffering from the manufacture and sale of fabricated wines. The French on the Loire have, owing to the ravages of the phylloxera for some seasons past, turned from being growers to being manufacturers of wine; and they have found, says another contemporary, much of their raw material 'in the hasty and wholesale productions of the neighbouring districts of Italy and Spain. A great proportion of this crude wine, hurriedly and carelessly made, is consequently unsound and immature. It is refined to the palate in skilful French hands. And this supply of the juice is supplemented by a supply of the grapes themselves. A vast trade has sprung up in these grapes. The vine-growers of north Italy and of northern Spain are now sending their grapes to France and Germany, and are for the time giving up wine-making. It is even reported that in some of the great Marsala districts—so far away as Sicily—so great and so profitable is the export of grapes to France, that this year there is danger that no marsala will be made.'

The great demand for *light* French wines comes from England; and as the French cannot, by reason of insect ravages, supply those wines pure, they have taken to supplying them in an adulterated or fabricated form. In this way, they make a shift to keep up their trade connections in this country; because they know that if the liquor is so diluted as to be below an alcoholic strength of twenty-six degrees—which is the Customs' standard for light wines—it will have entry into England on the reduced tariff; while the excellent and wholesome wines of Spain and Portugal, because their strength somewhat exceeds this standard, are charged upon a very much higher tariff, and are consequently shut out of the English market. It was long a popular belief that 'natural' wines never contained much alcohol, and that when their alcoholic strength exceeded twenty-six degrees, they might be held as adulterated. This is now found not to be the case, perfectly sound and wholesome wines frequently exceeding this limit.

The production of these fabricated wines is rapidly increasing; and, looked on merely as scientific triumphs, they are wonderful. In Hamburg, we are told, one can nowadays taste, without possibility of detecting any difference, two bottles of Johannisberg, the one genuine grape juice of the Johannisberg vineyards, and the other a liquid guaranteed to contain no grape juice whatever. The same authority states that in the neighbourhood of Marseilles we may purchase 'claret' which has no single ingredient that has any connection with vines, whether of the Bordeaux or any other district. All these concoctions, as already mentioned, are due to the fact that the English must have *cheap* claret; and what they call 'cheap' claret must be below twenty-six degrees of alcoholic strength; and this standard of alcoholic strength, like many other legal nets, captures the small rogues and allows the big ones to escape—that is, it places a restriction on the sale of Spanish and Portuguese wines that are mostly good and wholesome, and encourages the trade in light French wines that are to a very large extent either adulterated or entirely fabricated and artificial. The remedy for the evil, so far as

this country is concerned, would seem to be to raise the standard of alcoholic strength sufficient to admit of the entrance of the higher-class wines from Spain and Portugal into the English market; and as soon as the latter wines came into competition on equal terms with those from France, the market for the adulterator and the fabricator would be gradually closed, and their occupation correspondingly diminished.

## PRIMROSES AND OTHER FLOWERS.

### A HINT TO TOWNSFOLK FROM A COUNTRY GARDENER.

If we were so unfortunate as to be compelled to cultivate one class of plants only, we would be much inclined to choose primroses. A first-love makes a permanent impression, and primroses—the simple wild ones—were our first horticultural love. Long ago, we had a small plot planted almost wholly with primroses. That was before we were old enough to go to school. By-and-by the hedgeside primroses were gradually displaced, for kind friends collected and presented us with garden kinds. How rich we felt when we became possessed of these! We never will feel so rich again. And what miser ever exulted over his accumulated hoards as we did over these lowly gems! What lover of gold ever so gazed at his treasure, as we at these lovely yet simple flowers!

One day during the past mid-winter, we plucked one single bloom, which had ventured to salute the sun; and as we looked on its loveliness, all the past spring-times of a quarter of a century came rushing back upon us. Again we looked on the crumbling wall, last relic of the home where for generations our forefathers lived, beside which the treasures of our boyhood grew. Again our mother was by our side with her ever-ready instructions. There stood our father, returned from an evening's angling in the quiet river; and there our sister and our brother, as they were before the one grew to womanhood, and the other went to sleep beneath the primroses that were once his own. And as the sight of the grave to which these flowers were transplanted, comes up before us, we drop a tear, which might have been bitter but for the sweetness cast into our lot by the pure love of the simple wayside flower.

Surely every one loves primroses! Most persons whose youth was spent in the country, do; those whose homes are in the town, sigh for such treasures. The days when they gathered primroses are past with them in their brick-and-mortar-bound prisons, and if they ever think at all about them, it is with regret at their not being able to possess them. We shall, however, show that this fancied unavailing regret is a mistake to every one who can command a window-sill, a box, and a little common soil. Skill isn't wanted; but a love for the flower is. True, it does not bloom all the summer; but, unlike nearly every other flower, it doesn't mind sharing its lot with other things that will bloom when it goes to rest. A few crocuses and snow-



drops will enliven your little box almost ere the snow has left the hills, just as effectively as if no primroses were there. These should be placed round the sides. They will not be harmed if a few hyacinths should be placed singly between the clumps; and we all know that these will bloom in early spring. In summer, you may have a few sweet-peas, fastened to a string at one end, trained up one side of your window; and a climbing Indian cress or *Tropaeolum* at the other, framing your window with sweet-scented glowing flowers. When your snowdrops and other bulbs disrobe for their summer's sleep, a pinch of seed of the ever-popular and delightful mignonette, scattered along the sides, and lightly covered with soil, will speedily grow and hang over the sides in the most delightful drapery, and scent your room if you only move up the sash a little to allow of the fresh air entering. Talk of hangings and furnishings! what hangings ever surpassed or even matched glorious living blossoms and tender green leaves!

While love of flowers will enable any one to grow them, even under very great difficulties, sometimes a few hints are of service, especially to beginners; and as our life is spent cultivating plants, we are in a position to give reliable advice so far as it goes. We will say nothing about the construction of a window-box, for no doubt you have seen them, and the shape matters nothing. However, we would advise you not to make yours less than six, or more than nine inches in depth.

The next thing is the soil. If you have friends in the country, you can easily procure that. If your friend is, or knows, a gardener, so much the better. What you want is loam, and this is old fibry turf well decayed. A good substitute is decayed twitch-grass, and that can easily be got. Failing that, choose moderately heavy soil from a field; and when you have got it, mix it with one-third of decayed manure, or, better, thoroughly decayed leaves—what gardeners call leaf-mould. A tenth of sharp sand or small gravel, and a few pieces of charcoal or potsherds, will make a nice, sweet, rich, porous soil, in which all the plants we have named will grow to perfection.

The placing of the soil in the box properly, is a matter of much importance. To allow the surplus water to escape, you must provide drainage. To secure this, a few holes must be bored in the bottom of the box; and over these holes, one inch of broken cups and saucers, imbricated like the slates on the roof of the house, with the concave sides down, must be laid. From the soil, pick out any fibry matter, and spread it, after shaking out the loose soil, over the corks; this will prevent the soil working in among them, and choking the drainage. Worms must also be removed, or they will work the whole soil into a puddle. Then fill the box with the soil, and press it firmly; for loose soil holds too much water. Don't exactly ram it hard, or the tender roots will fail to penetrate it. Leave half an inch at the top of the box empty, to hold water.

Now you are ready to begin; now you possess a garden. All you want now are a few seeds and plants. If you begin in spring, and that is the best time, you had better procure a few plants

of the kind you love from a friend in the country, or buy them from a nurseryman. Go in for what you love.

We will not add to the list, for it would only bewilder a beginner, and those further advanced don't need instruction—experience has taught them what to grow. Primroses may be planted either in spring or autumn; snowdrops, crocuses, hyacinths, and bulbous plants late in autumn; annuals, such as mignonette and Indian cress, in April; sweet-peas and hardy annuals generally, in March. In sowing seeds, always cover them with soil twice the thickness of their own diameters, and take care that the soil never becomes parching dry or puddled with wet. In watering, fill the box to the brim with water, and it will soak all the soil. To allow it to pass freely away, let the box stand on two pieces of wood, so that the water may have free egress. Never water by dribblets, for that sours the surface and starves the bottom; and never water till water is actually wanted.

#### MUSINGS IN THE TWILIGHT.

In the Twilight alone I am sitting,  
And fast through my memory are flitting  
The dreams of youth.  
The Future is smiling before me,  
And Hope's bright visions float o'er me—  
Shall I doubt their truth?  
I know that my hopes may prove bubbles,  
Too frail to endure,  
And thick-strewn be the cares and the troubles  
That Life has in store.

But 'tis best we know not the sorrow  
That comes with a longed-for to-morrow,  
And the anguish and care:  
If the veil from my future were lifted,  
Perhaps at the sight I had drifted  
Down into despair:  
If I knew all the woes that awaited  
My hurrying feet,  
My pleasures might oftener be freighted  
With bitter than sweet.

And yet, though my life has been lonely,  
Some flowers I have plucked that could only  
From trials have sprung;  
Some joys I have known that did borrow  
Their brightness from contrast with sorrow  
That over me hung.  
For the moonbeams are brighter in seeming  
When clouds are gone by,  
If only a moment their gleaming  
Be hid from the eye.

Sad indeed would be Life's dewy morning,  
If, all Hope's bright promises scorning,  
O'erburdened with fears,  
We saw but the woe and the sorrow  
That would come to our hearts on the morrow,  
The sighs and the tears.  
So 'tis best that we may not discover  
What Fate hath in store,  
Nor lift up the veil that hangs over  
What lieth before.

EMMIE J. BARRATT.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.